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PRINCIPLES IN THE DETERMINATION OF
BOUNDARIES

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BY
ALBERT PERRY BRIGHAM
Colgate University

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THE GEOGRAPHICAL REVIEW

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PRINCIPLES IN THE DETERMINATION OF BOUNDARIES*

By ALBERT PERRY BRIGHAM
Colgate University

Three Stages of Civilization

THE TRIBAL STAGE

The student of boundaries must take account of a threefold evolution, marking a primitive, or tribal, stage, in which such lines do not exist; a mixed, or transitional, stage, in which demarcations are shifting but gradually embrace all regions of the world; and a third, or ideal, stage, in which they become in great part fixed and at the same time of diminished importance save for convenience of administration. We are now in the second stage, and some would deny that the third condition can ever become effective.

In the hunter-nomadic type of world economy there is room enough; tribes grow up in their own centers, with more or less clash in their wanderings; but frontier problems do not press, and the limits of ownership are vague. Such boundaries as existed in early times were without plan or consciousness on the part of the groups that were separated. The world was comparatively empty. Groups expanded in regions where hunting, fishing, pasture, and simple tillage were favored. Over the mountain ridge, beyond a belt of desert, or across a lake or salt sea were other assemblages of men. There were no maps, no surveys, and no boundary lines; there were only separating zones. As put by Professor Lyde, the frontier was the farthest region from which the tribe could get food.¹ It was the domain of self-sufficiency for an embryo nation.

Another English writer sees a vivid picture of the hunter expanding his radius, meeting others expanding their radii and becoming man hunters, the ancestors of the warrior nobles of the Middle Ages and of the Renais-

* Read at the fourteenth annual meeting of the Association of American Geographers, Baltimore, December 27-28, 1918.

¹ L. W. Lyde: Types of Political Frontiers in Europe, *Geogr. Journ.*, Vol. 45, 1915, pp. 126-145.

sance, down to the imperialists of the present day.² In the war from which we have now passed is evidence that primitive conditions have kept a stubborn grip on a changing world.

THE TRANSITIONAL STAGE

The second stage shows developed civilizations and high densities of population in large parts of the world, with primitive or semi-civilized peoples elsewhere. Frontiers of the modern and definite kind abound in more advanced regions, which shade off into penumbras of spheres of interest, spheres of influence, protectorates, and buffer states. In so far as less-developed lands are held as colonial property, as in Africa, demarcations are as essential as in Europe.

Boundaries as we know them, as the schoolboy learns them, strict lines of separation, are therefore features of maturing civilization, with growing densities and increasing pressure on natural resources. They have in the past been commonly put as far out from the center of the group or nation concerned as its numbers and needs required, or as far as the ambitions and the power of its rulers made possible. During many centuries boundaries have been laid down in treaties, and treaties have been, in the main, the expression of power, power to get and power to prevent an enemy from getting.

THE IDEAL STAGE

The final stage, to which we look, offers a world full of autonomous nations, all fitted for self-government and fitted to live in amity with their neighbors to mutual profit. Self-restraint as a mark of national policy is a development of our own times. Nations are learning the futility of Alsace-Lorraine experiments in boundary shifting. Many boundary disputes which in earlier times would have been settled by conflict have in the last hundred years been peacefully adjudicated.

We are approaching, or we should like to think we are approaching, the time when national limits are to be set for equal welfare on both sides of the line, when considerations of defense and of aggression fall out of sight, and justice is the only goal—justice involving the administrative convenience, reasonable self-sufficiency, and economic co-operation of national groups. So far as this ideal is reached, a line across a plain may be as good as a mountain range, the forty-ninth parallel as useful as the Pyrenees. Under such ideal conditions international lines would be little more than our bounds of states, counties, and towns—they tell us where to vote, where to pay our taxes and record our mortgages, and who will build roads for us, police us, and otherwise carry out our will in the various spheres of government. As state and civic pride still abounds, we need not fear that patriotism will die.

² Patrick Geddes: *Boundaries and Frontiers*, *Westminster Rev.*, Vol. 169, 1908, pp. 257-260; reference on p. 257.

Thus we meet the question of today: How far have we passed out of the tooth-and-claw stage of human relations? Have we even touched a dim, outer zone of the millennium? If victory had rested with the enemy we well know on what principles boundaries would have been drawn. Victory being where it is, just and rational boundaries, we may safely hope, will safeguard peace in our time. Here, then, is our point of departure for a summary of the principles which control the fixing of boundary lines.

Two Opposing Theories of Boundaries

Two opposing types of view have been set forth by British geographers during the past four years. These authorities are Colonel Sir Thomas Holdich and Professor L. W. Lyde, and their conclusions are developed in several published volumes and in a series of essays appearing in the *Geographical Journal*, the *Scottish Geographical Magazine*, and the *Nineteenth Century*.

HOLDICH'S VIEW: THE DEFENSIVE FUNCTION OF BOUNDARIES

Sir Thomas Holdich is recognized as pre-eminent among those who have had actual and long experience in boundary demarcation. He is a soldier and represents distinctly the military and defensive conception of the function of boundaries. It is his deep and unalterable conviction that signs of international good will are not frequent enough to warrant boundary fixing "which would lead to the mingling together of the human fringes of the nations."³ But if the fringes are already entangled we are at liberty to ask what we can do about it. It is indeed fair to remind ourselves at this point that Holdich is contesting Lyde's view that boundaries should of set purpose be put where population is dense and where people are forced to meet one another. Man being "a fighting animal, he must be prevented from physical interference with his neighbor by physical means. . . . A boundary must be a barrier." Ergo, if there be no barrier, we must rely on armament and fighting—a rather hopeless outlook. Yet Holdich admits the need of considering *first* the sentimental values in a boundary dispute; but he returns—and who, after England's four years, will wonder?—to the conclusion that "security means armament," an artificial protection if no natural defense is possible. No rosy hopes of millenniums should blot out the lesson of tears and blood. Of all barriers, mountains are "incomparably the best." Holdich often recurs to the Himalayas and the Andes, but most of the world, and most of the people of the world, are not on the two sides of the Andes or the Himalayas; and the Alps, the Carpathians, and the Pyrenees fall far short of supplying high fences for Europe's dense and diverse millions. Failing high mountains, Holdich comes to common divides and water partings. These indeed are determinable and, for human periods, reasonably stable; but are they defensive?

³ T. H. Holdich: Political Boundaries, *Scottish Geogr. Mag.*, Vol. 32, 1916, pp. 497-507.

Recognizing that small elevations are more common than Pyrenees, our author reverts to the defensive value of hills, supplemented by forts and trenches, and thus practically surrenders his major contention for natural ring fences and falls back upon the primitive method of keeping the world in some kind of order. These admissions are hardly consistent with the opinion that "there are but few wide spaces existing in the world where some adaptable features of natural topography are not to be found ready to his (the boundary maker's) hand." On the other hand, one may freely ask where, in the thousands of miles of Eurasian plain that stretch from the Pyrenees to Vladivostok, can a boundary expert trace around any nation "a sound, defensible line" within which it "may find peace and security." We may well fear that a doctrine of natural encirclements will delude us with empty hope; and, in default of international good will, send us along the rough road of recurrent war and patched-up peace.

LYDE'S THEORY OF ASSIMILATIVE BOUNDARIES

Professor Lyde approaches the subject from the point of view of the human geographer and brings to bear upon it his wide knowledge of the historical, racial, linguistic, and economic relations of human groups. Nowhere are his views more compactly expounded than in his essay on "River Frontiers in Europe."⁴ He refers to Holdich's then recent paper before the British Association as setting forth a purely military doctrine of frontiers, as if war were the normal state of man. If a mountain barrier is far better than all others, then a boundary is good, not as it promotes, but as it prevents intercourse. A boundary must on the other hand be an international feature; it must be obvious, indisputable, a promoter of relations in peace and a barrier in war. Lyde cites the Plate, long a frontier line but never a source of friction as regards the countries bordering it. Civilization is "progress in the art of living together," and the world long ago became an economic unit. It is the navigable river which encourages "a maximum of peaceful tendencies." As to the defensive value of rivers, the case of the Danube is cited as having defended Belgrade for four months, in 1914, in the second Austrian attack. It is of course easy to remind ourselves of what happened to Belgrade at a later stage of the war. Many rivers of Russia are cited as having protected the great retreat, especially those rivers which had no marshy bordering plains but did have parallel railways behind them, a combination which "gives a defensive position of enormous strength." Such a barrier may be as good as a mountain range, especially as mountains often have an arc form or a steeper front on one side than on the other, thus destroying the defensive equilibrium as between the two sides. Mountains having failed to keep enemies apart in the sad past, why put large faith in them now?

Rivers favor cultural and linguistic assimilation and the incoming of

⁴ *Scottish Geogr. Mag.*, Vol. 32, 1916, pp. 545-555.

outside ideas and of international tendencies. "We want the two nations to be unified in all except political allegiance." The frontier embodies a formal contract which commercial communities, common on rivers, are more likely to respect than are nomad highlanders. Lyde's closing sentence in this paper has the tone of prophetic warning. "If the new map of Europe is based on purely military lines, Europe will have to expiate it—once more—on purely military lines."

Such are the alternatives offered. On the one hand nations may not trust each other and must have defensible borders. Such defenses are hard to find and, when found, must be supplemented by artificial constructions and armies. All being done, the best defensive arrangements are likely to be neutralized by destructive modern invention. On the other hand is the hope, more or less theoretical and academic, promulgated by a university professor, that nations will live together in reasonable amity, assimilating themselves to each other, preferably across the narrow waters of a river.

Physical Geography and "Scientific Boundaries"

Those who follow Holdich make much use of the phrase "scientific boundaries." We may inquire whether there are such boundaries, seeking thus to know what the words really mean. We suppose natural features are intended, which man seizes for his purpose; and this purpose is assumed to be division and to involve separation and defensibility, as viewed from both sides. There are four commonly recognized kinds: mountains and water partings in general; deserts; seas; and rivers. Of all these we may say that they show infinite diversity, irregularity, and confusion in magnitude and in form and that they offer a limited assortment of sharply defined, unmistakable, and unchanging divisions.

MOUNTAINS

Mountain ranges do not commonly offer single, commanding ridges, but break into components running in rough parallelism, or at various angles, with intricate and sometimes elaborately trellised systems of drainage, developing on maturing mountain fields of the Appalachian type. The Jura, lying between France and Switzerland, is a pertinent example. Water partings are far from meeting elementary notions of rooflike separation and show vague cols joining the opposite slopes of a plateau, or the uncertain and shifting sources of streams in vast glacial marshes.

DESERTS

Perhaps the best historic example of desert boundaries is found in Egypt. Here for thousands of years was a densely peopled area, shut off on three sides by an arid wilderness and on a fourth by a sea which knew no developed art of navigation. Yet Egypt managed to fight and to be fought,

in spite of her natural seclusion. Now we carry millions of soldiers in ships, run a railway across the Sinaitic desert, and mark the aërial passage of a schoolmaster from the Holy Land to the Nile in fewer hours than it took decades for the Hebrews to go in the opposite direction. The near future holds railways across the Sahara and over the arid wastes of Australia, while express trains have long crossed the Great American Desert from the Rio Grande to the Saskatchewan.

SEAS

Seas have been regarded as efficient boundaries of the "scientific" order. The American red man was long safe from pale-faced conquerors through the fending power of the Atlantic; but Roman and Carthaginian were getting marine practice in effective military crossings of the Mediterranean, and the Strait of Gibraltar did not save the Iberian Peninsula from centuries of African rule. America now yields her claim to isolation as never before in her history and is beginning to recognize that the jingo myths of some American school histories, rather than the Atlantic Ocean, separated the United States from the mother country.

RIVERS

Under the influence of the old, defensive ideals, geographers have not thought that rivers were good boundaries. People on the opposite slopes and flood plains of a river valley tend to meet and to engage in like activities. A river is indeed a military obstacle, and armies have sacrificed thousands of men in the present war in seizing bridgeheads necessary to their advance. George has pointed out that a river is always a weak spot in the communications of an invading army.⁵ One does not quite understand Lyde's contention that a river backed by a railroad is a strong defense, in view of the range and power of the artillery which may be assembled on the opposite bank. Other objections to rivers as international borders offer themselves. Some rivers disappear seasonally, or they shift their courses, or their waters are withdrawn for irrigation. Public works of large variety belong to river courses, and the people of both banks must be equally interested in their control. Water rights must be established in relation to domestic supply, pollution, industrial power, and navigation. Bridges, cables, and ferries are to be added to the catalogue of a river's belongings. All these things involve and imply intimate and friendly relations.

But, however we urge the limitations of rivers, we cannot rule them out if assimilative boundaries are to have significance in the future. Indeed, if we go back to the defensive idea, we must still use rivers in Europe, because they have some value and are far more numerous and available as dividers than any other class of natural features.

⁵ H. B. George: *The Relations of Geography and History*, Oxford, 1901, p. 30.

Niagara Falls, a name marking two communities, one in Canada and the other in the United States, is an example of several of the problems named above, and it may be urged that they have been amicably solved. But the forty-ninth parallel has been as good a divide as Niagara River or the Great Lakes, and the same reason may be affirmed in relation to both—a decently disposed people lived on each side of the line.

Lakes are related to rivers as they are to seas, when viewed as boundaries. Marshes offer a belt, like the desert. They are like the desert in being hard to cross; but they present a different sort of difficulty in crossing and in some future time may be reclaimed, deforested, and provided with roads.

World Survey of Physical Boundaries

THE AMERICAS

Light is thrown on our problem by the most cursory inspection of the world map. The northern boundary of the United States begins in the east with the ragged outline of Maine, which projects far north into the basin of the St. Lawrence River and historically represents geographic ignorance, was settled by a series of painful negotiations, and violates all notions of a scientific boundary. The line through the upper St. Lawrence and the Great Lakes is a natural line until the north shore of Lake Superior is reached, where it leads off through a tangle of lakes and marshes to the Lake of the Woods. Thence the forty-ninth parallel is used, and we have the authority of Holdich for the badness of straight lines, as being expensive to determine and mark and as paying no heed to topography or human choice.

The last objection has little value here, since the line was originally run through an uninhabited region. The first objection has this support, that the line as marked diverges in places as much as 2,000 feet from the astronomical position.

The southern Alaskan frontier is cast through a tangle of high mountains and is widely held to be unjust to Canada, in that it shuts off an enormous Canadian hinterland from direct access to the sea. Sufficient reference has already been made to the Rio Grande, and the remainder of the Mexican boundary is wholly arbitrary. North America is assuredly poor in boundaries of military or separative value.

The same is to be said on the whole of South America. Brazil is bordered by ten political units, of which seven are autonomous nations and three are colonial possessions governed from Europe. On the side of the three colonies the line follows the water parting. Sections of rivers form part of the lines toward Paraguay and Uruguay. We think of Brazil as the country of the Amazon, yet vast areas of Colombia, Ecuador, Peru, and Bolivia reach over into the mazes of the Amazon forest.

The southern stretch of the Andes nearly led Chile and Argentina into

a boundary war, which was averted by reference to a British commission, of which Sir Thomas Holdich was a member. The line was by treaty to follow the heights of the range. Investigation in an unmapped region showed that the water partings were well eastward of the line of main crests. Hence the problem; the solution kept the peace but is in no way scientific. If we follow the view that rivers are not desirable as boundaries, then the middle Andes, shutting off northern Argentina from northern Chile, are the only good international boundary in South America.

AFRICA AND ASIA

Africa tells the same story, if possible in stronger fashion. Because the continent has little in the way of sustained mountain ranges and is bordered by a smooth shore line, the available features are rivers, lakes, and deserts. The greatest African rivers function to a small degree in this field; the Niger not at all, the Nile but slightly, the main stream of the Congo only in a part of its lower course. The Zambezi, Limpopo, Vaal, and Orange Rivers serve only as between British dependencies, assuming that German Southwest Africa will pass to permanent British control. The great African lakes play a part comparable, in the future it may be, to the international functions of our own Great Lakes. Egypt has already been considered. No African country can rest its security upon physical boundaries.

Before we come to Europe, there remains Asia. Asia, in the large, is a central highland with a lowland fringe. Central Asia is a barrier in itself, mountain and lofty plateau, deserts of rock and snow, deserts of aridity. Northern India, on the southern edge of this great core, has, in the separatist view, the finest boundary in the world, yet nowhere has British nervousness been more fully exhibited, and nowhere have we such an outfit of spheres of influence, protectorates, and buffer states as here.

The Amur, the Mekong, and the upper Oxus are the main examples of river boundaries. Recent history is sufficient commentary on the physical security of Manchuria, with Russian influence reaching across a great river and Japan seeking protection and grasping for power across the sea. The plains of Mesopotamia are shut off from the world by deserts and mountains, and they have been the football of military powers from the dawn of history to the twentieth century. Writers upon Palestine divide their emphasis between the isolation of the little land and its historic place on the highroads that for thousands of years have joined three continents. It is a long way from the armies of Assyria and Egypt to the crusades and the British victories of the past year.

Historical Survey of Physical Boundaries in Europe

So far the map does not speak loudly for the protective value of scientific boundaries. We pass to observe the type examples of Europe. Here,

if anywhere, we shall find demonstrative evidence that physical features are in high degree divisive and defensive.

THE PYRENEES

"In Europe the Pyrenees form perhaps the most typical example of an effective mountain barrier . . . they stand as they have stood for ages as the parting line between two Latin nations which so far have shown no tendency towards mutual assimilation or desire for cultural unity." This is the judgment of Holdich;⁶ but the facts are not historically so simple as here asserted. Not taking account of earlier Phenician, Greek, and Carthaginian interests, the Iberian Peninsula, save for a brief Frankish invasion, was all under Roman sway down to the first barbarian incursion about 400 A.D. Since that time the peninsula, with a clean boundary on the crest of the Pyrenees, has been under one sovereignty only for a period of about half a century. During the invasions there was a Visigothic kingdom which extended far over the Pyrenees and generally reached to the Rhone valley. About 600 A.D. the range formed a clear boundary between the Frankish and the Visigothic kingdoms, but half a century later the Visigothic sovereignty again approximated the Rhone delta.

The Saracen attempt to bestride the Pyrenees was less successful, but even the blow dealt by Charles Martel at Tours did not end the Moslem ambition to get a foothold north of the mountains. Charlemagne held the Spanish March, and, as he came to his end, his strong hand reached across the Pyrenees as far as Barcelona and a stretch of the upper Ebro. At the time of the First Crusade, 1100 A.D., Navarre and Aragon were small states along the range, and the Kingdom of France included the Mediterranean shore line as far as Barcelona. In the fourteenth century the Pyrenees became the essential boundary, but there were minor fluctuations until the middle of the seventeenth century. It is to the purpose to observe that Napoleon put a large army into Spain and was baffled of his aim not by the "scientific" wall of the Pyrenees but by the fires of European resentment which determined to crush him and free the world from the menace of universal dominion. The human spirit rose, as it has risen today, and dwarfed all physical conditions.

THE ALPS

Granting that the Pyrenees are one of the best of protective boundaries, the Alps confessedly offer poor support to this type of view. This is widely recognized. "The Alps have not isolated like the Pyrenees."⁷ "It was the fashion in Roman times to speak of the Alps as the rampart of Italy. They have at all times proved a singularly ineffectual one . . . Goths and Huns, Lombards and Franks, Holy Roman Emperors, French Kings, Na-

⁶ T. H. Holdich: *Political Frontiers and Boundary Making*, London, 1916, p. 150.

⁷ L. W. Lyde, article cited in footnote 1, p. 130.

poleonic and Austrian armies have swarmed over their ridges. The Alpine passes have served as the neck of an hourglass; the human sand runs through them easily either way.''⁸ To the same purpose Dominian quotes the lines of Cowper—

Mountains interposed
Make enemies of nations who had else
Like kindred drops been mingled into one

and observes that "the passes of the Alps refute the poet's statement. Their uniting functions eventually overcame their estranging power."⁹ Popular notions emphasize the unity and physical aloofness of Italy, shut into her peninsula and fended from icy winds by her towering Alps. Yet Italy has fought a bloody war to free herself from the threat of Trentino and the menace of natural naval fortresses on the farther side of the Adriatic Sea. The history of two thousand years does not here lend much support to the barrier theory.

The Alps were crossed by the armies of Hannibal, and the conquests of Caesar and his successors wiped them out as a barrier. Odoacer, a German barbarian, established in 476 a kingdom astride the Alps reaching from Sicily nearly to the Danube. The Ostrogoths overthrew Odoacer and still more completely ignored the mountains, pushing their frontier to the south bank of the Danube. The Lombards, also German in race, next occupied the Alps and pushed their sway almost to the end of the peninsula. Charlemagne's empire reached from the North Sea beyond Rome. The First Crusade saw the empire equally extended in the south. By 1360, when the empire was much broken, it still reached over a part of the Alpine range as far as Tuscany. In 1549 the Swiss Confederation took its place among the mountain heights, whence it has never been dislodged. In Napoleon's time it became a part of the Confederation of the Rhine but came forth in the reconstruction of Europe in 1815, never, we may hope, to be thrown down from its high seat.

Thus the great range has never been a boundary in the strict sense of delimiting two nations which came up to either of its great lines of water parting. If we examine the Alps today we find them as an ideal boundary only between France and Italy. Switzerland occupies the central heights without unity of race or language. It thrusts a tongue southward among the Italian lakes without a shadow of geographic reason and projects into French territory past Lake Geneva in equally arbitrary fashion. In like manner it cuts off the upper waters of the Rhine and joins Austria along a meaningless frontier. Lyde avers that it is "too strong by natural features and human type for any of its neighbors to be permanently dangerous to it."¹⁰ One may question this assurance and may well doubt whether

⁸ D. W. Freshfield: The Great Passes of the Western and Central Alps, *Geogr. Journ.*, Vol. 49, 1917, pp. 2-26; reference on p. 5.

⁹ Leon Dominian: The Frontiers of Language and Nationality in Europe, New York, 1917, p. 333.

¹⁰ Article cited in footnote 1, p. 134.

the considerations cited fully explain the German failure to cross Swiss territory. At all events Switzerland for a short section of the Alps fills the rôle of a buffer state. The Italian struggle with Austria will result in making the great mountain arc more nearly a precise boundary than it ever has been in the course of European history.

THE ENGLISH CHANNEL AND THE NORTH SEA

One might hold, with large show of reason, that the English Channel has been the most effective of all historic boundaries. It has undergone the test of centuries, and the island kingdom stands forth needing no argument. Before we pass to particulars, we may summarize our conclusion by asking if there would have been immunity from invasion in all modern times if we could imagine an interchange of population types between Great Britain (in the strict meaning of the term) and Ireland. In this manner we inquire concerning the relative protective value of the national spirit and the geographic situation. We shall make no pretense to a quantitative answer, for here comes in geographic influence, which has no doubt had its share in molding the nations to defensive strength.

The English Channel and the North Sea (the latter hardly now to be called the German Ocean) did not prevent the Romans from invading and organizing the larger part of the greater island. They were ineffective barriers for centuries against the thieving pirates and tough-handed immigrants who rocked across the waters from the German coast lands, from Jutland, and from the Norwegian fiords, to become the heralded ancestors of Englishmen and New Englishmen. England was successfully invaded in 1066 but never since that remote time. Here we seem to belie our observation that boundaries were specially efficient in primitive days.

Let us come back to the power of environment and, using Lyde's phrase, recognize in the British water frontier a "racial agent," a force or, better, a condition, which helped to make and weld and develop a people, truly a world power. Here were a climate, a soil, a fishing zone, an outfit of minerals, and a defensive water barrier, which encouraged and protected development. Being in the realm of human geography, with emphasis on the human, we put with environment a fortunate gathering of the raw material of civilization, the marauding Angle, Saxon, Dane, and Viking, Teutonic if we must admit it, but as far today from the Teutonic evolution of the Continent as if the Straits of Dover were the Atlantic Ocean.

Here have grown industry, invention, national unity, and the love and power of liberty. As a sea barrier has promoted these ends it may be said to have been efficient in defense; however it be, the kingdom has stood free from the foul clutch of the invader for eight hundred and fifty years because in defensive power, centering in the human spirit, she has more than stood even with any power of aggression.

Our conclusion thus far is that defensive boundaries, as observed in his-

tory and as seen in a regional survey of the world today, are few, even in the most highly differentiated regions of all, the continent of Europe. And the few boundaries of distinct efficiency show such limitations that we have no warrant for reliance on them in present settlements or for future generations.

Human Factors in Boundary Making

RACE

Emphasis lies today on the human factors in boundary making. The word "race" has been much used in this field but deserves to be discarded. All the great nations and many of the smaller are composite in origin, and it is the nation—not the race—that is looking for ring fences. The German may be Teuton, Slav, or Alpine; long head, round head, brunet, or blond; he is a member, for boundary purposes, not of a race, but of a nation. South Germany has been deemed by good authority to be less Teutonic than eastern France.

LANGUAGE

Nor is language a criterion for the boundary maker. Professor Spenser Wilkinson, in discussing Lyde's paper on boundaries before the Royal Geographical Society, recalled a Greek lady who, in the course of a day's travel in the Balkans, denied that Bulgarian speech necessarily made the speaker Bulgarian. Greeks some of them were in all but speech—"the test of nationality is the will of each." Nationality is the criterion, and men may elect their nationality just as they choose the town they will live in and the business they will pursue. Belgium, bilingual; Switzerland, quadrilingual; and Alsace-Lorraine, with French sympathy and German speech, are examples which in these days need but to be named.

NATIONALITY

Nationality means unity of ideal, derived chiefly from hereditary experience or from geographical environment or more often perhaps from both combined. It is the group which wishes to live and act together and to have a common government, embodying its purpose and its emotion in the word patriotism. National feeling is tied up with primitive heroism, or the sage wisdom of the fathers, which preserved the group from destruction; it embodies itself in song and folklore. These heritages gather about sacred pieces of ground, the altar spots of the homeland, and they build themselves into constitutions and laws, into literature, into social customs, distinctive dress, and forms of art. With these cherished things go too often an unreasoning isolation and an absurd and dangerous repugnance to the foreigner and his ways. "The men who compose a single nation must think together." "Belgium is fathomed in their hearts." "Serbia extends as far as her folk songs are heard." Thus, with poetic feeling,

does Dominian compress into terse sentences the essence of nationality. A nation, then, is a group loving its own soil, devoted to its ways of living, proud of its history, sure of its destiny. A home, a life, and the will to live and to die if need be in order to preserve them—such is nationality.

EXPANSION OF PROLIFIC PEOPLES

Nations grow, and in the expansion of prolific peoples the boundary maker meets his most stubborn problem. It has been solved by force; but the world that is, and that is to be, will not willingly meet the question in that way. Human distribution follows to a degree the analogies of biology. Men spread like oysters, chestnuts, fishes, and birds, into environments that favor comfort and perpetuate their kind. The principles of migration, struggle, and adjustment find application in human history. Human groups cannot be put into tight compartments any more successfully than can other creatures. The great northern forest of North America projects a peninsula of its own species far south on the crest of the Appalachians. The Pacific Coast forest has a great enclave among the typical forests of the Canadian Rockies, and all types of forest shade into one another. Such is the distribution of all faunas and floras, fossil and living. So much is to be said for man in his relation to other living things; we inherit an evolutionary condition. Must we therefore apply the law of the jungle to civilization? A great nation, basing its science, as it based its history, its philosophy, and its religion, on its desires, decided that war is a "biological necessity." It fought to get room for increasing numbers. Even Sir Thomas Holdich admits that boundaries are violated by an "irrepressible demand for more space for an expanding people."¹¹ Can the world admit this procedure? We recognize it in the case of small or primitive populations, as in early America, but what are its limitations among civilized peoples? Must a high birth rate be regarded as giving title to a neighbor's estates? Again Holdich refers to the "right of expansion" to meet the imperious demand of multiplying people as promotive of dispute and war as long as the world lasts. This surely is a hard saying. We cannot indeed expect to regulate population output by an international convention, but perhaps we can regulate international conduct for peoples who convert their domain into a human stock farm. Even Dominian allows that the *Drang nach Osten* is inevitable, because the East is thinly populated and fertile. But this does not answer the question whether the penetration should be imperial and militaristic, or individual and peaceful. If the world is to exist, and if invention is not to proceed to the self-destruction of the race, we must find peaceful ways of caring for growing populations. We cannot pull up line fences while our neighbors sleep and then kill them for resisting in the morning. No writer has put this imperative of the future better than Professor Lyde.

¹¹ Article cited in footnote 3.

"The natural growth of the national unit justifies geographical expansion only in primitive times and places. Even so, as all empty spaces must some day be fully occupied, territorial expansion is only a temporary means of shirking obligations. Certainly in a mature civilization natural growth can be legitimately met only by intensive, not by extensive development—at all events inside that area of mature civilization."¹²

EXPANSION THROUGH GREED AND AMBITION

Economic greed and dynastic ambition have used the common human passion for bigness as an argument for territorial expansion. Let us conquer and add territory. We need rich colonial possessions that we may have raw materials and enlarge our markets. It is for the economist to formulate the answer, and it would be significant in boundary determinations. As recognized by more and more of the world at this time, the true end of nations and governments is the well-being of the individual. Is the economic position of a small nation in a decent world worse than that of a great nation? And does the individual man, or the special industry, have as good a chance in a small as in a large nation? If there is, or can be, equal opportunity to realize the true ends of life, a strong motive for tearing up boundaries is put to rest.

We do not attempt the answer. We may, however, observe that the Swiss seem as happy and prosperous, by all decent standards, as British, French, or Americans. The quality of loyalty is not set by the bigness of one's country, rather in the love of its institutions, devotion to its physical associations, pride in its achievements, and satisfaction in the comfort and opportunity which it offers. It may be, after all, that the meek shall inherit the earth—a German today may well envy a Dane or even a Cuban.

LOSSES BY EMIGRATION

Here belongs the alleged loss of the emigrant who goes out from the homeland and naturalizes himself under another flag. Out of this view which regards alienation as a subtraction from the legitimate resources of a nation, arise propaganda, espionage, mental reservation, double allegiance, that ugly brood of policies devised to build up *Deutschstum* in America, colonies in South America, and extension of dominion everywhere. Which would have been a greater boon to Germany—a large body of emigrants becoming loyal Brazilian citizens, retaining kindly memories of the Fatherland, and fostering friendly trade; or a collection of aliens maintaining a solid block of language, drilling at arms and plotting to put a blotch of German color on the map of the southern continent? Britons have gone to the United States, to Canada, to Australia, to South Africa, with godspeeds and no grudging, with consequences to the motherland now self-revealed and glorious. A seed of personality, of industry, thrift, and

¹² L. W. Lyde: Some Frontiers of Tomorrow, London, 1915, p. 12.

liberty blown on the wind of chance and rooted in the farthest corner of the world does not make the home country poor. When the world learns the lesson of mutuality it will have cleared the worst tangles in its boundary problems.

BOUNDARIES FOR ECONOMIC EQUILIBRIUM

There is a school of writers who base their conclusions on a so-called economic interpretation of history and call for countries outlined as natural economic units having a considerable degree of self-sufficiency in resources and trade opportunities. In their view small nations do not much count if they stand in the way of big neighbors. Mr. Simon N. Patten, of the University of Pennsylvania, is an apostle of this doctrine. His views of the "unnatural boundaries of European states" and of a scheme of reconstruction can best be told in his own language, which even in excerpts appears to do him no injustice. "Old tradition persists, and ideas of political freedom based on former conditions demand small states. Economic progress, however, makes larger states inevitable now that the world's resources are to be exploited in more effective ways." We are forced to conclude that former conditions, home, traditions, constitutions, customs, patriotism, count for nothing and that man ought to live by bread alone. "Germans sacrifice so much for their country because they see an even more degraded Germany looming up as a result of defeat." "Germany is admittedly in a position where her present boundaries act as a hindrance to her industrial development and a bar to her social progress. Her natural seaports are in Holland and Belgium." "Shall race feeling or economic interest dictate the formation of boundaries?" "Germany suffers a similar wrong when she is kept from the North Sea and a permanent commercial union with Holland and North Belgium." "The masses of the people would grow more contented as their prosperity and security were assured, and would soon become callous to those reactionary appeals to the emotions that now make so much trouble for the world." "Scientific boundaries could easily be arranged that would bind together the people within them and make these inhabitants generous and sympathetic to those outside of them. Moreover such zone boundaries are easy to draw in Europe, as the natural features that fix them are so pronounced." "Belgium is an artificial state created out of the whole cloth with no regard to social or economic consideration. Only a false enthusiasm for small political units gives any ground for its continuation."¹³ Of the above sentiments, a geographer has only this to say: that they represent an alleged principle of boundary making; that social philosophers have missed the recipe for making men good and contented; and that further criticism either from the social or the geographic point of view is unnecessary.

¹³ Unnatural Boundaries of European States, *Survey*, Vol. 34, 1915, pp. 24-32.

Present problems are an inheritance from the migrations, expansion, and conquests of the historic past, and the new map cannot be beaten into conformity with abstract theories. Making up countries by rule is as impracticable as any radical socialist program for individual prosperity.

Specific Problems of Europe

It is not within the scope of this article to discuss, beyond bare reference, the new map of Europe. Map makers, however, must take account of the principles which we have attempted to place in order. Certain applications of these principles may be briefly examined. The author has made it clear that with certain reservations he is more in sympathy with the Lyde type of doctrine than with that so ably urged by Holdich. With modern appliances for aggression, the world must put its faith in the decent behavior of nations; but the nations must for a time, and perhaps for a long time, be prepared to supplement this faith by co-operative militant action. It is pessimistic and unthinkable to settle down to the Prussian principle of world order.

FRANCE

The simplest survey of the map of France shows the futility of the ring fence as a safeguard of her liberty. She is bordered by four seas and cannot defend herself, unassociated, from any pirate navy that is permitted to roam them. It is no violent hypothesis that Swiss neutrality should have been violated and that Italy should have been forced into military co-operation as a member of the Triple Alliance. In the light of such possibilities examine the French east front. The Belgian plain, protected by treaty and by the forts of Liège, have their own story. The Verdun gap was held by the blood of Frenchmen. There would still have been open the Belfort gap, the Geneva-Rhone route, the passes of the Savoyan Alps, and the coast gate of the Riviera. It is idle to talk of the Ardennes, the Vosges, the Alps, the Pyrenees, and the sea as protecting France. One of the most eminent of French geographers has said, speaking of the land border, that his country was "encircled but not imprisoned." He might have said "surrounded but not protected."

POLAND

Even worse is the barrier theory for the new Poland. This unhappy country appears on the map at least as early as the time of the First Crusade, bordered by Pomerania, Bohemia, Hungary, and Russia. Then the Carpathians were its southern boundary. Similar was the status two centuries later with even longer frontage on the Carpathians. There was vast extension in the sixteenth century when Poland came to the Baltic between Pomerania and the Teutonic Order, including in the south the

present Galicia. Succeeding centuries saw wide conquest and withdrawal on the vague plains of the east, until the consummation of the great international spoliation of 1795. Could Poland have saved herself if she had had good geographic barriers? The answer lies in the Romanoff, Hapsburg, and Hohenzollern dynasties. No physical features can make him safe who dwells among thieves. Can scientific boundaries be drawn now to protect the suffering millions of Poland? Let the schoolboy and the reader of the newspaper war map answer.

COASTAL VENEERS OF THE BALTIC AND THE NEAR EAST

We cite one further class of examples and attempt to apply the barrier theory. Mackinder in his own vivid manner has described the coastal veneers of the Baltic, the Adriatic, and the Aegean Seas. On the Baltic is a veneer of Germans in East Prussia backed by a hinterland of Poles. On the Adriatic is a veneer of Italians fronting the solid mass of Yugo-Slavs and offering one of the toughest problems of the settlement soon to be made. At Saloniki are Greeks, and in the valleys that lead down to the Aegean border are Bulgarians. Similar is the distribution of Greek and Turk east of the Aegean. Such are the tests by which the barrier theory is met, and in these tests it is found wanting. We are thrown back upon the will, upon mutual concessions, upon assimilation, favored by democratic governments, and no doubt upon a residuum of physical restraint exercised upon those who disdain moral control. We gather our conclusions in the following paragraphs.

Conclusions

The present arrangement of human groups is a heritage from long-existing biological conditions of dispersal, migration, and intermingling, complicated by the vagaries of the human will, as seen in lust of conquest, love of war, dynastic ambitions, and economic greed.

The necessity of boundary lines has come with the filling of the world's spaces, the pressure of population on resources, and the lifting and widening of the material standards of living.

We hold with Lyde that civilization is "progress in the art of living together." Any nation is partial and backward in civilization in proportion as its standards of international dealing fall below its laws of intra-national conduct.

We do not accept Holdich's virtual admission that international ethics are permanently so low that defensive boundaries will always be essential to reasonable safety against attack.

On the other hand we are not convinced that boundaries should be deliberately and always placed where people meet. We would not avoid such lines if the greater justice to the greater number on both sides of the proposed fence seems to require them. We might for the present give

questionable or quarrelsome neighbors as high a fence as is practicable, as we try to keep the weak of all sorts from overpressing temptation.

Approximately twenty-five human groups in Europe show such unity of purpose and ideal, such community of interest, of history, and of hopes, and each in such reasonable numbers, that they have embarked or deserve to embark on a career of nationality.

The world is now pretty well agreed that ruling houses are obsolete, that the interests of great powers are no more valid than those of small powers, and that economic equilibrium or self-sufficiency in natural resources does not outweigh the rights and desires of any truly national group.

Europe has an exceptional number of physical units which in primitive days could serve as the cradles of nations. In the advanced conditions and high densities of today, however, the number of physical compartments falls far short of the number of groups which properly wish independence.

Modern appliances for war have impaired the security once gained through physical barriers. Heights of land and all kinds of waters give important aid in war, but they do not fend off war. We cannot "destroy the germs of frontier dispute by drawing physical boundaries."

We must draw boundaries on defensible or separating lines if possible but at all events in such a way as to work substantial justice.

Here is the sphere of a league of nations, embodying the will of all mature civilization that imperfectly civilized groups shall no longer make biological inferences or blasphemous conceptions of divine destiny the excuse for perpetuating tooth-and-claw methods in the relations of peoples.

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